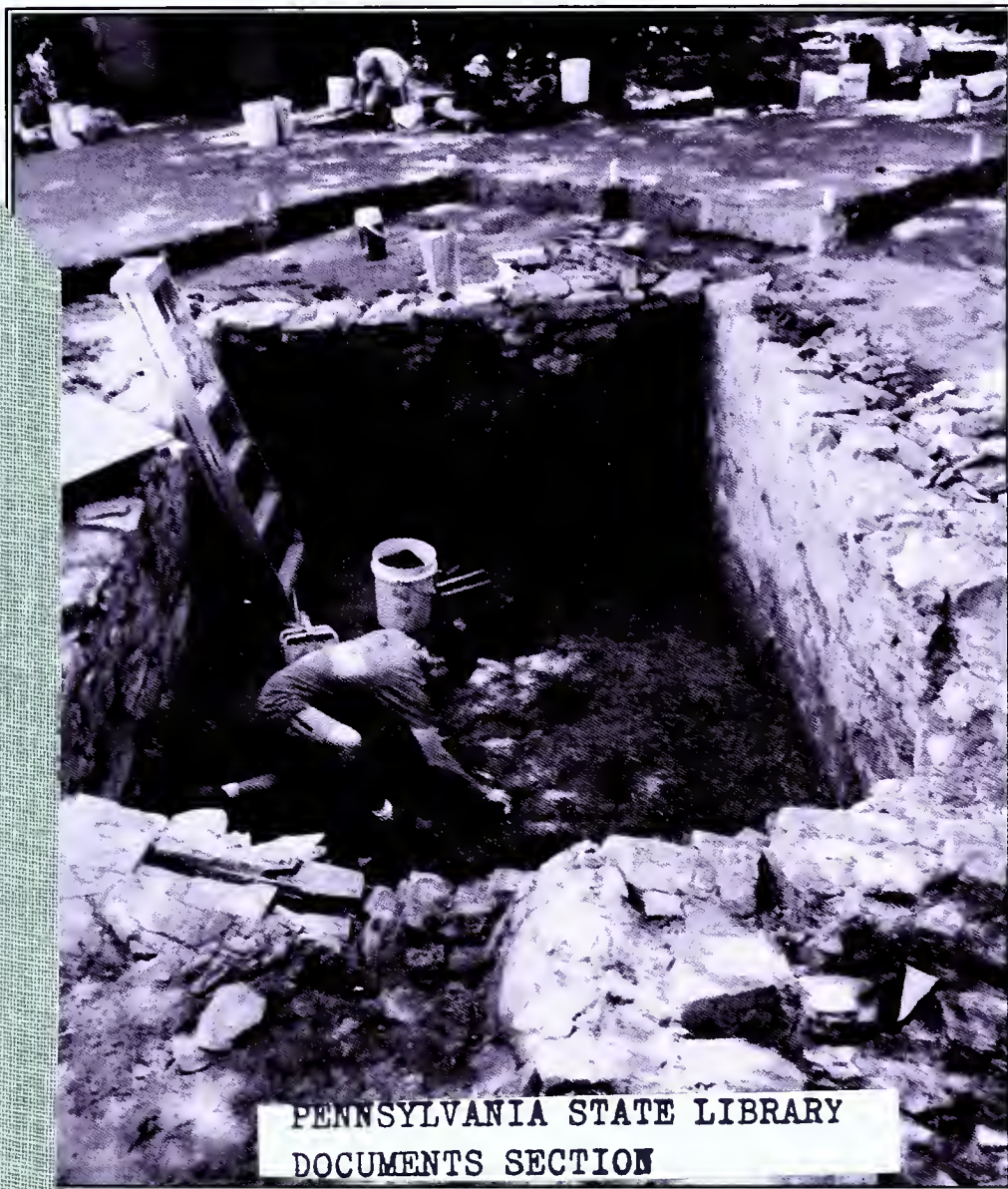


Historical Archaeology at Ephrata Cloister

A Report on 2000 Investigations



Stephen G. Warfel
Senior Curator of Archaeology
The State Museum of Pennsylvania
and
Lecturer in Anthropology
Elizabethtown College

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION



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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
**Pennsylvania Historical
and Museum Commission**
Harrisburg, 2001

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The Ephrata Cloister Archaeology Project is a public-private partnership, dependent upon resources from state government, nonprofit organizations, and an academic institution. Special recognition and gratitude are extended to the sponsors of the 2000 field season.

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Acknowledgments

The Ephrata Cloister Archaeology Project is most fortunate to sustain the support of the following individuals, who review and assist with various administrative aspects of this multi-year research program. I sincerely thank Dr. Brent Glass, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Anita Blackaby, Director, The State Museum of Pennsylvania; Donna Williams, Director, Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums; Michael Ripton, Site Administrator, Ephrata Cloister Historic Site; and Presidents and Boards of Directors of the Friends of The State Museum and the Ephrata Cloister Associates for recognizing the importance of the archaeological record and its ability to provide a unique view of the past. I also thank Elizabethtown College's Sociology and Anthropology Department and Continuing Education programs for continued support. Archaeology is an academic endeavor; the college makes it possible for stu-

dents to earn academic credits while gaining valuable hands-on experience.

Credit for the success of the 2001 excavation project is attributed to four energetic, hard-working groups of individuals: students who enrolled in the Historical Archaeology Field School class - Brad Bauman, Jeff Kauffman, Jacqui Heidelberger, Mike Diehl, and Jevin Orcutt; paid crew members - Kristin Montaperto (Field Director), Emily Bender (Lab Director), Maria Galban, Dave Burke, Tom Warfel, Lydia Garver, and Kathie Gonick; a Milton Hershey School intern - Greg Kulevich; and seventy (70) volunteers, representing Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, who enthusiastically donated over 1,320 hours to help uncover Mount Zion's history.

For the first time since the beginning of the Ephrata Cloister Archaeology Project,

inclement weather prevented us from completing the excavation on time. Consequently, it was necessary to return to the site for an additional day to excavate features, complete soil profile drawings, clean tools, and prepare the site for closing. I am especially grateful to Kristin Montaperto, Maria Galban, Emily Bender, Lydia Garver, Kathie Gonick, Mike Diehl, Jacqui Heidelberger, Brad Bauman, Tom Warfel, Lara Warfel, and Dave Burke for their dedication, persistence, and professionalism. They put in a very long day to ensure that the investigation finished in a proper manner.

After the field season concluded, Maria Galban and Emily Bender skillfully produced CAD (computer aided drafting) maps that appear in this report. Emily Bender, assisted by Sarah Dunham, Mike Middleton, and loyal State museum volunteers, processed 269,161 artifacts in the museum's Archaeology lab. Not only is the task remarkable because of the size of the collection, but it was also accomplished during a move of the museum's

Archaeology Section to the new Commonwealth Keystone Building. I sincerely thank each of them for completing such a daunting task on schedule.

Finally, I am indebted to Janet Johnson, Rich Petyk, Liz Wagner, David Burke, Emily Bender, Mike Middleton, and William Sisson for taking the time to read and comment on a draft of this report. It is a better product as a result of their efforts. I, however, assume full responsibility for any errors, which might appear in graphics, text, or interpretation offered herein.

Stephen G. Warfel
May 1, 2001

Introduction

History is filled with lost “things.” There are lost centuries, empires, colonies, towns, people, buildings, and objects. I have often thought that this aspect of history is curious, for we are told that history serves as our collective memory. If it does, how can so many things become lost?

Historical memory is much like personal memory. It is selective. History preserves elements of the past that were unusual, brought great joy or sorrow, or, for one reason or another, were deemed important. Because importance is redefined by each generation, history is dynamic. It is constantly subject to change and reinterpretation. This trait of history is also ironic, for our perception of the past is static, fixed by facts in time and space. There is a certain economy and efficiency to presenting the story of the past as an unwavering truth, accepted by all. Such an approach provides us with a common group identity. It defines us as one. Like human memory, it links us to other people, times, and places, both past and present. And, like memory, it often imparts a sense of comfort, well-being, and belonging.

When a piece of the past is found, a certain amount of risk is involved. Will the discovery permit us to maintain our perception of the past, or does it require that we see the past differently?

During the summer of 2000, a piece of Ephrata Cloister’s past was found, after being lost for nearly 150 years. Its discovery required an enormous amount of effort and helps us understand a time, when life in the 18th century religious community

that occupied this Commonwealth historic site was neither static nor tranquil. The lost piece is the first communal dormitory built for celibate men on Mount Zion. The following narrative provides a detailed account of its archaeological discovery and an assessment of the structure’s importance in Ephrata Cloister history.

The 2000 field season, which began on June 5th and ended on August 1st, was the eighth consecutive year of archaeological investigations at Ephrata Cloister. Consistent with Ephrata Cloister Archaeology Project goals - the discovery of early community structures and reconstruction of member activities, based on recovered artifactual evidence - the present project sought to address specific questions raised by findings of the preceding archaeological field season and documentary evidence.

Whenever archaeology is conducted on a historic period site, that is, one for which a written record exists, it is necessary to become acquainted with documentary accounts pertaining to the project area before probing the earth. Although such accounts may be flawed by information gaps and inaccuracies, they can sometimes be used to develop an excavation plan and help explain archaeological discoveries. Therefore, a summary of Mount Zion’s history is offered before we examine project objectives, methods, findings, and conclusions. For a more detailed account of Mount Zion’s history see *Historical Archaeology at Ephrata Cloister: A Report on 1999 Investigations* (Warfel 2000: 2-5).

Historical Summary

Mount Zion is first referenced in the *Chronicon Ephratense* (hereafter referred to as the *Chronicon*), the principal history of the Ephrata community written by Brothers Lamech and Agrippa in 1786. For reasons that are not entirely understood, Conrad Beissel, the community's charismatic leader, selected a site on the hilltop for construction of the first Brother's convent or dormitory in 1738 (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:107-108). Although few details regarding the structure are provided, it is recorded that "The house was not entirely finished nor fully occupied until five years after this" (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:108). The *Chronicon* also indicates that a prayer house for the Zionitic Brotherhood, the name applied to celibate men who lived in the convent, was built on Mount Zion in 1739 (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:119-128).

Seven years after the Brotherhood occupied the convent they were removed from the building. Conrad Beissel condemned the Brotherhood for violating the community's principles of self-denial and poverty, as evidenced by their purchase of a nearby mill, the accumulation of profits, plans to add a new wing to the convent, and the purchase of "unnecessary things" (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:171). Beissel's charges split the Brotherhood and the Ephrata worship community. Israel Eckerlin, the Prior or director of the Brotherhood, and other influential Brothers were expelled from the site. Several householders - married members who lived off-site and worshipped with celibate members - departed with them. Those Zionitic Brothers that remained loyal to Beissel were temporarily relocated to the Kedar, the first communal structure, and assigned the task of building a new dormitory and prayer house, called Bethany (later Bethania). Located near Beissel's house in the meadow, Bethania was built in 1746-1747 from lumber acquired for the new wing of the Mount Zion dormitory, where "The foun-

ation had already been laid for this purpose..." (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:194-195). Widows and widowers, previously housed in the Kedar, then occupied the dormitory on Mount Zion. Community worship was conducted in the Mount Zion prayer house until at least 1753, the year in which the Swedish Lutheran minister, Israel Acrelius, visited the Cloister and attended services in the building (see Reichmann and Doll 1953:63).

In the 1760s, exiled Brothers and worship community members returned to Ephrata Cloister. Some reoccupied the Mount Zion dormitory against Beissel's protests (Sangmeister 1825:10-11). Legal actions taken to remove them from the structure were unsuccessful, for the court upheld the dissenters' ownership claims. Repeated offers of baptism to reintegrate the renegade group into the Beissel-led community were rejected. Factionalism, which split the society in 1745, persisted into the 19th century.

During the winter of 1777-1778, several Ephrata Cloister buildings, including one or more on Mount Zion, played a special role in the American Revolution. The Continental Army confiscated and used them for hospital purposes (see Gillett 1981; Heiges 1948; Martin 1947). Although pacifists, Cloister community members helped nurse some 250 sick and wounded soldiers. Several of those who tended to the soldiers paid the price of human life due to an outbreak of "putrid fever" (typhus or typhoid) (Gillett 1981:91; Martin 1947: 132-133). The *Chronicon* infers that the Mount Zion prayer house was destroyed after its hospital use, for it states that "This handsome Prayer-house [on Mount Zion]... did not stand more than 38 years, being converted into a hospital during the war of the Americans, after which it was never restored again" (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:119).

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries there are few documentary references to the buildings on Mount Zion. Those that do exist raise important questions. "Zion" is cited as a place for devotional meetings as late as 1790 (see Bach 1997:280). Yet, how can this be true if the prayer house "was never restored again," and the Beissel-led community was unsuccessful in re-establishing ties with nonconformists who lived in the Mount Zion dormitory? Furthermore, a land indenture, dated May 25, 1812, states that "the Church Calld [sic] Zion [sic] and the grave yard near the same" are reserved for the use of three elderly celibate sisters (Ephrata Cloister, Indenture, 1812, EC92.01.06). Does this imply that the Mount Zion prayer house did survive its military hospital use? Or, does it refer, instead, to another Mount Zion building, used as a worship place during the community's final years?

A September 1815 survey of the Cloister property is the earliest historical map,

house, could be the one referenced in the indenture. Indeed, it stands closest to the Mount Zion cemetery, which lies at the west end of the Cloister property. If it is another prayer house, when was it built? Why do documentary references only account for two buildings on Mount Zion - the 1738 dormitory and the 1739 prayer house? Is the building not referenced in the *Chronicon* because it was constructed after its 1786 publication date? Was it constructed by members of the dissident Eckerlin faction and, therefore, intentionally omitted from the *Chronicon*?

On February 21, 1814, the Ephrata Cloister household congregation incorporated as the Seventh Day Baptist Society of Ephrata (Spohn 1993:41). Thereafter, much of the Cloister property was converted to working farmland. Several of the early buildings, constructed in the meadow below Mount Zion and maintained for secular and religious purposes, continue to appear in the docu-



Figure 1. Section of 1815 survey depicting Mount Zion and center of Cloister community.

which depicts buildings on the hilltop. Three are illustrated (Figure 1). Assuming that the 1738 dormitory is shown on the right (under the "n" in Zion) and the 1739 prayer house (apparently in ruins) is shown in the middle (under the "Z" in Zion), the third building, left of the assumed prayer

ments. The principal Mount Zion buildings, however, disappear from the historic record after incorporation.

Obviously, Mount Zion's historic record is incomplete and raises questions that prevent us from reconstructing a complete

history of the 18th century Ephrata community. Hence, we must turn to the hilltop's archaeological record, consisting of buried architectural remains and accumulated layers of refuse resulting from

human habitation, to gather new, independent evidence and develop insights concerning Mount Zion's role in Ephrata Cloister's past.

Project Objectives

The 2000 excavation project was designed to address questions raised by documentary research, as well as ones resulting from the 1999 archaeological field season on Mount Zion. The re-exposure of a 40'-square stone foundation, found during a 1963 dig at the site, and the discovery of additional structural elements, such as footings and storage cellars, suggested the ruins were previously misinterpreted. Instead of representing the site of the 1739 prayer house, as concluded at the close of the 1963 project, the remains are interpreted to mark a section of the 1738 dormitory and its planned wing, the foundation of which was laid but never built upon (see Warfel 2000). Because only a segment of the larger building was exposed, its overall size remained unknown. The present project sought to expose the entire footprint of the building and investigate interior space in search of architectural clues that might suggest the structure's layout and design. Such information would permit comparisons between this building and those that were constructed both before and after it. Were Ephrata Cloister structures built according to an architectural tradition or style? How does the Brothers' dormitory compare and contrast with the Kedar, constructed three years earlier?

Although two stone-lined cellars were discovered during the summer of 1999, only one, designated Feature 226, was completely excavated. Therefore, another objective of the 2000 field season was to completely investigate the remaining cellar, Feature 250, and compare it with the Feature 226 cellar. Were they both built with internal storage features, such as shelves and alcoves? Did they both have ventilation shafts, designed to ensure air circulation? Was there evidence of water damage in each, caused by run-off from exposed limestone outcrops west of the structure?

Artifacts recovered during the preceding summer distinctly represented activities and behavior of the structure's three principal occupants, namely, the Zionitic Brotherhood, dissident members (the Eckerlin faction), and the Continental Army. Could newly discovered artifacts be directly associated with these groups? If so, would they provide new insights regarding their activities or behavior? Would additional artifacts confirm or require adjustment of the site's estimated mid-1840s closing date?

Investigation Methods

The discovery of a ventilation shaft on the northwest wall of the Feature 226 cellar during the previous season confirmed that the cellar wall marked the outside wall of the building (Figure 2). Consequently, to track the building's west wall line to the point where it intersects with the south wall line, a grid consisting of five-foot-

square units or test pits was required both west and south of the 1999 excavation block (Figure 3). A primary east-west baseline was established, using two concrete monuments installed at site grid points S165 W580 and S165 W530 the preceding summer. A north-south baseline, running through grid points S215



Figure 2. Ventilation shaft on west wall of Feature 226 cellar, facing northwest.

W580 and S285 W580, was set perpendicular to the east-west base line. As the summer progressed, the excavation grid was expanded east and north to trace the south and east wall lines of the building. All grid points employed during the project were measured from the two base lines.

By the close of the project, eighty-three test pits, numbered 328-410, were positioned to meet stated objectives (Figure 4). Twelve units - TPs 340, 344, 368, 391, 392, 395-397, and 398-401 (numbered in *Italic type*) - were not investigated beyond the removal of sod, for it was determined that each was located outside of the building's perimeter. Four test units, TPs 248, 249, 256, and 257 (numbered in normal type), initially excavated during the summer of 1999, were reopened to completely expose the Feature 250 cellar.

Horizontal measurements of discovered objects and features (cultural or natural soil disturbances) were made with reference to grid coordinates; the southwest grid coordinate of each test unit was selected as the designator for test pits. A bench-

mark of known elevation (359.55') was set on the concrete monument at S165 W530 and used as a reference for vertical measurement of below-ground finds.

Turf was removed with sod shovels and inspected for artifacts before placement on a spoil pile. Distinct soil layers and features, distinguished by color and texture, were defined, photographed, and mapped before excavation with sharpened masons' trowels and miniature picks (Figure 5). All excavated soils were screened through ¼" hardware cloth. Artifacts were collected according to soil layer and/or feature or feature level within five-foot grid units. Plan view drawings were completed for each layer within each test pit and/or feature or feature level. Section or profile drawings were completed for significant features and the excavation block perimeter.

Due to 1999 findings, several procedural changes were adopted. Level 1 sod and Level 2 plow zone (a former land surface soil layer mixed by plowing) were removed simultaneously. This was done to expedite excavation, since it was proven

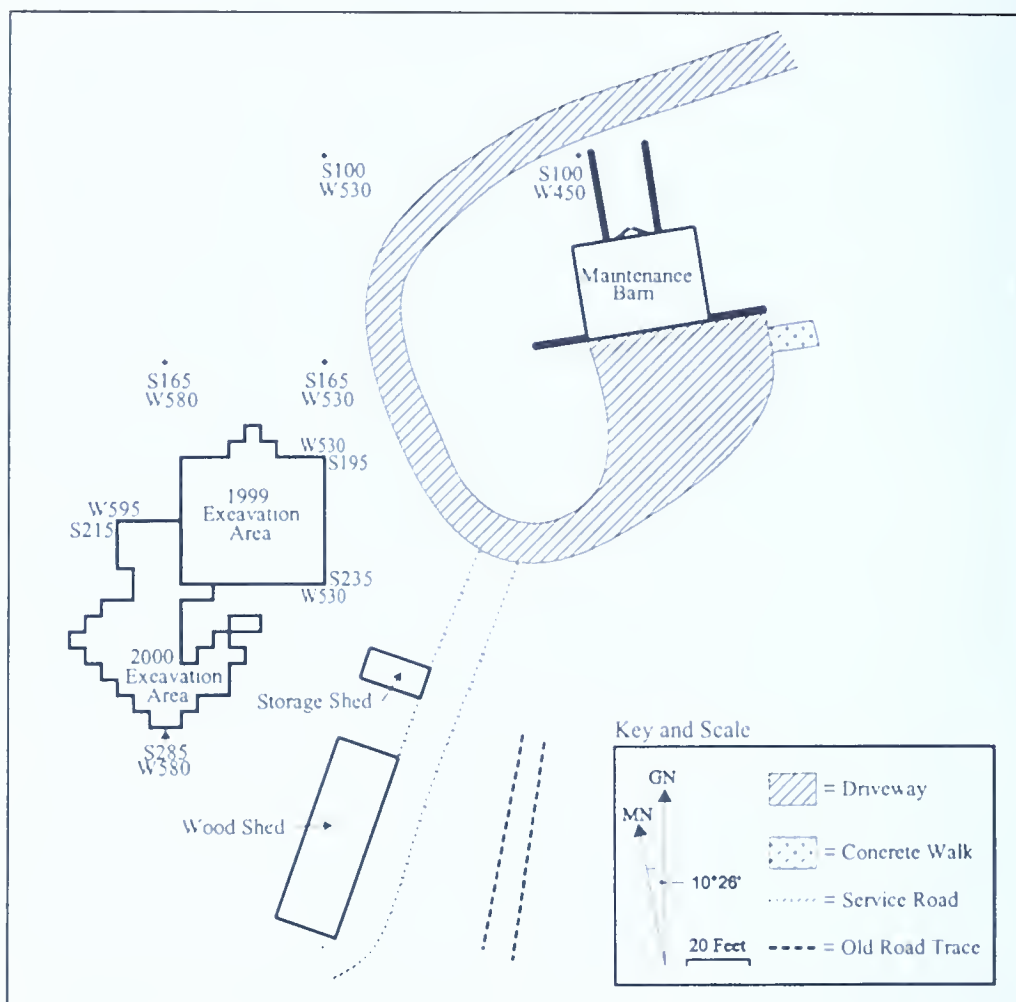


Figure 3. Site plan depicting location of 2000 excavation block and primary grid points.

that both layers were disturbed by past agricultural and landscape activities. Three-inch levels within distinct fill layers of the Feature 250 cellar were not removed individually as they were in 1999. Artifact analysis demonstrated that fill layers, although different in color and texture, resulted from a single episode of in-filling and not from the gradual accretion of habitation debris. Likewise, soil samples for flotation - a specialized technique used to recover preserved botanical remains, such as seeds and nuts - were not collected, for it was determined that cellar deposits did not result from direct use. Recovered botanical remains would be of little value if they could not be associated with a particular period of site habitation.

Standard documentation included periodic photography using black-and-white and color transparency films. A digital camera was used for supplemental recordation. Daily journals, kept by the author and excavation team members, and numerous specially designed recording sheets provide a permanent record of observations and site excavation.

Artifacts were cleaned, cataloged, and inventoried according to standard archaeological procedures. The artifact collection, field records, journals, and photographs are curated at The State Museum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, and are available for use by researchers upon written request.

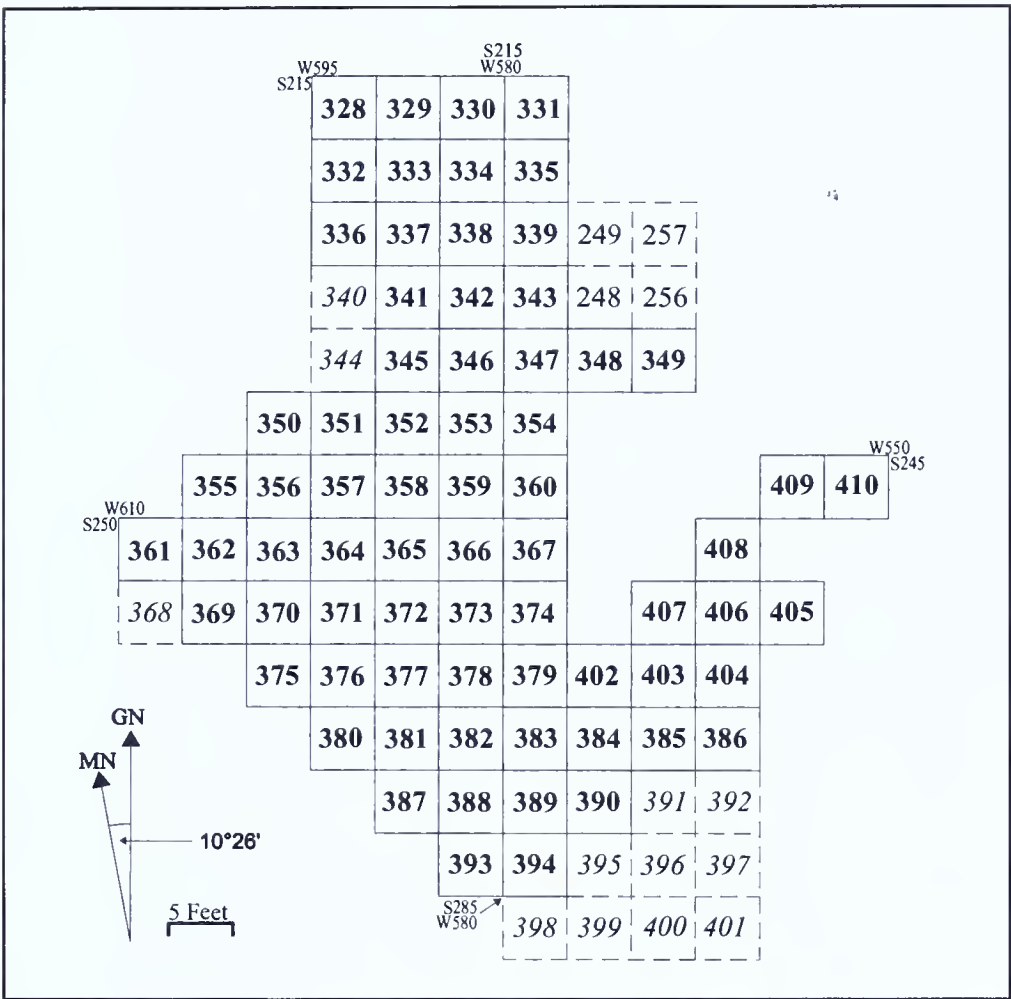


Figure 4. Location and numerical designation of 2000 test pits.



Figure 5. Excavation in progress, facing north.

Excavation Findings

Soils

Mount Zion is a bedrock ridge composed of dolomite and limestone. Due to visual similarity, the two are "indistinguishable in the field" (Pough 1996:30). To maintain consistency with previous studies, limestone is used as the referent to naturally occurring stone on Mount Zion.

There are many locations on Mount Zion where the bedrock outcrops, that is, where it is exposed at the ground surface. Soils within the project area are relatively thin and strewn with weathered limestone fragments.

Level 1, the sod layer, consists of a root mass embedded in dark brown silt loam soil. It was simultaneously removed with Level 2, a dark yellowish brown silt loam. Level 2 is the original land surface, turned by late 19th and 20th century plowing. The package of these two soils varied between 4" and 11" in thickness and contained 157,937 artifacts. The broad array of materials reflects activities of each habitation period on the hilltop. Artifacts include: window glass and brick fragments; plaster and mortar; clay roof tile pieces; hand- and machine-made nails; lead window came (used to glaze windows); a modern padlock with key; 18th and 19th century ceramic vessel sherds; historic and modern bottle glass pieces; drinking glass fragments; glass medicine vials and bottles; straight pins; brass hooks and eyes; buttons and cuff links; thimbles; buckles; bone comb fragments; lead bale seals; aluminum foil and pull tabs; dietary animal bone; mussel and oyster shells; a plastic comb, fork, Dairy Queen spoon, and NASCAR lighter; iron wire; two human teeth; two pieces of lead printers' type; pocket watch keys; strike-a-light flints; clay tobacco pipes; clay marbles; pocket knives; slate pencils; hand tools, such as punches, a chisel, and a file; a horseshoe; lead musket balls; gun flints; six coins, ranging in age from a 1734 to 1990; prehistoric stone chipping debris; and five prehistoric stone spear tips.

Once Levels 1 and 2 were removed, different soils appeared at various locations in the excavation block. In each test pit south of the S240 grid line, except units 353, 354, 359, 360, 366, 367, 373, 374, 378, 379, 402, 403, and 406-410, a sub-layer of Level 2 was observed. Designated Level 2A, it consists of a mottled yellowish brown clay loam. In the afore-mentioned test units where Level 2A was not present, Level 2 soil laid directly on Level 4, a culturally sterile clay loam subsoil that ranges from yellowish to reddish orange brown in color. Level 2A is interpreted to be a remnant of the original land surface, which was not frequently disturbed by the plow. It is no coincidence that it occurs in test units that produced evidence of the building's stone footing. Likely the farmer that worked this area knew of the stone concentrations and intentionally lifted his plow to avoid damage to the equipment. Ceramic sherds found in Level 2A were noticeably larger than those recovered from upper soil layers. This size difference is attributed to less frequent contact with the plow. Plow scars were observed in the subsoil of squares that did not contain Level 2A soil and confirm the project area's agricultural usage after the building was removed from the project area.

Level 2A produced 58,899 artifacts. Artifact types found in the soil layer are nearly identical to those found in Levels 1 and 2. Items of special interest include: three human teeth, two pieces of lead printers' type, three lead bale seals, four pocket knives, an 1800 Liberty one cent piece, fragments of bone combs, a pocket watch key, one iron mouth harp, brass or copper book hardware (one corner and one clasp hinge), a splitting froe, and a prehistoric stone spear tip. Many ceramic vessel sherds and pieces of a ceramic bird figurine found in Levels 1, 2, and 2A mend, demonstrating the interrelationship of the soil layers (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Partially mended ceramics from Levels 1, 2, and 2A. (Top row, left to right: Whieldon pitcher, pearlware bird figurine, and Nottingham tankard. Bottom row, left to right: Westerwald jug, slip-decorated earthenware bowl, and agate cup.)

North of the S240 grid line, soils found under Level 2 were designated Levels 3A and 3B. Both soils were previously identified during the 1999 investigation and consist of a compact light yellowish brown clay loam. Level 3B, however, is slightly brighter in hue and seems to possess less clay. It is further distinguished by concentrations of wood charcoal specks and small pieces of lime. Although these two subgroups of Level 3 were mapped and removed separately in the field when possible, they were often difficult to distinguish. Both were found on top of the Feature 250 northwest cellar wall. Level 3A overlapped Level 3B and spilled into the cellar, constituting the uppermost layer of fill in the feature.

Level 3A contained 19,090 artifacts, 26.5% of which were recovered from Feature 250 cellar fill. Artifacts recovered from 3A include: window glass; brick and mortar pieces; plaster fragments; clay roof tile pieces; wrought and cut iron nails; iron hinges and pintles; an iron window hook

(similar to ones still used on the extant 1743 Sister's House); glazed ceramic stove tile fragments (similar to ones recovered from the Bethania site); clay stove pipe; lead window came; 18th and 19th century ceramic vessel sherds; buttons and cuff links; brass hooks and eyes; buckles; dietary animal bone; mussel shells (four of which contain red pigment and were possibly used as paint cups); 18th century bottle glass; table utensils; one lead printers' type spacer; wood charcoal; five coins, including a 1769 George III half-penny, a 1787 Connecticut coin, and a 1797 Liberty one cent piece; a strike-a-light flint; clay tobacco pipe fragments; a bone die (half of a dice set); a copper or brass book ornament; tools, including a shovel blade, a file, and three punches; a horseshoe; a gun lock; prehistoric stone chipping debris; and a prehistoric hammerstone used to manufacture stone tools.

This artifact assemblage is remarkably similar to those recovered from Levels 1, 2, and 2A. Architectural objects account



Figure 7. Partially reconstructed enameled glass tumbler.

for 62.4% of the artifacts found in Level 3A and are remnants of the building that once stood on the site. The soil layer, consequently, is interpreted to be a mixture of demolition debris and household refuse which accumulated outside the building during its habitation. We must remember that in the 18th and early 19th centuries trash was simply tossed out of doors and windows. This is a medieval custom that traveled to the New World with all European immigrants, not just those of German origin.

Level 3B contained 16,911 artifacts. The assemblage is comparable to that recovered from Level 3A, with the exception of the following items: twelve straight pins, one faceted blue glass bead, an extraordinary enameled glass tumbler (Figure 7), a 1798 Liberty one cent piece, a musket ball, a prehistoric stone spear tip, eight wire nails, and pieces of coal. Wire nails and coal demonstrate the soil layer was disturbed by the plow, since both artifact

types are attributed to the mid-19th century or later. Although similar enameled glass fragments were found in Level 2A, only those pieces recovered from Level 3B mend. The bird design and colors, which ornament the tumbler, are typically German. It is not known if the object was imported or made by a German artisan working in the New World, perhaps as nearby as the Stiegel glassworks in Manheim, Pennsylvania (see Papert 1979:45-46).

Transfer-printed pearlware ceramic vessel sherds are the most recent type of pottery found in both Level 3A and 3B soils. Pearlware ceramics ornamented with this distinctive decoration were manufactured in England between 1795 and 1840. Their occurrence in the soil layers along with moderately worn 1790s coinage suggests that the deposits were created no later than the second quarter of the 19th century. To compare the chronological similarity of the soil layers, a Mean Ceramic Date

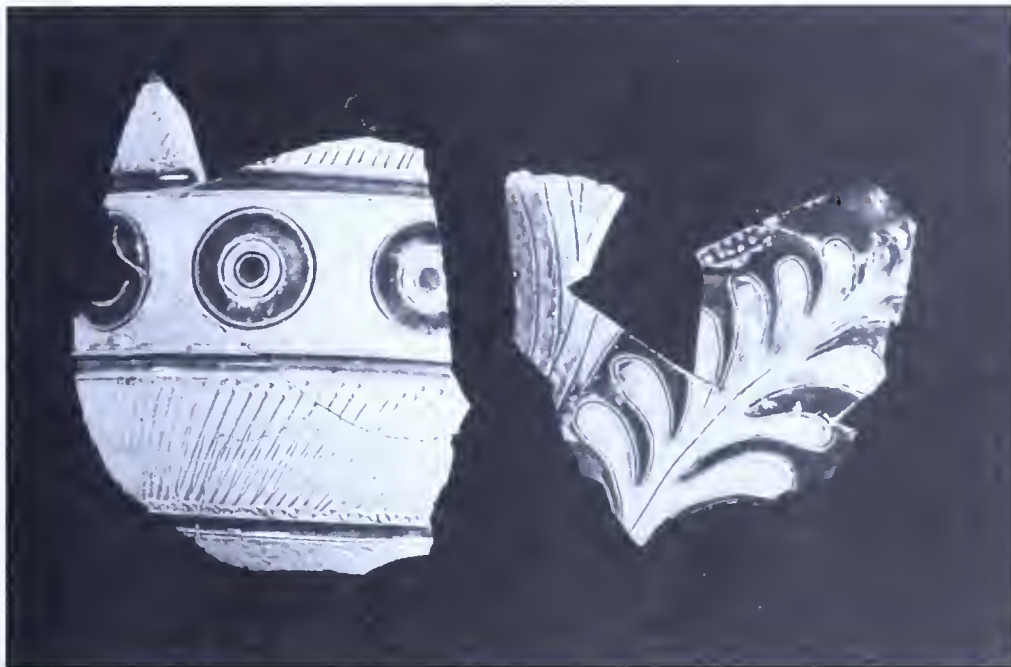


Figure 8. Partially reconstructed Westerwald stoneware jugs.

(MCD) analysis was done for each. Mean Ceramic Date calculations are used by archaeologists to estimate the average date of a habitation site, feature, soil layer, etc., and are based on the quantity of a given ceramic artifact type and its mean date - the midpoint between when the ceramic type was introduced and taken out of production. The MCDs calculated for Levels 3A and 3B are 1792 and 1739, respectively.

The dissimilarity of the dates is at first surprising, for the two layers contain comparable artifact types. It is the quantity of early and late 18th century ceramic vessel sherds in each, however, that are responsible for the disparate results. Levels 3A and 3B are interpreted to represent distinctive trash accumulations along the outside wall of the building that were redistributed and mixed when the structure was demolished. Undoubtedly, further mixing occurred when the site was leveled in preparation for agricultural use. The inter-relationship of the two layers is further demonstrated by ceramic vessel reconstruction. Sherds of two Westerwald stoneware jugs recovered from Levels 3A and 3B directly mend (Figure 8).

In Test Pits 330, 331, and 334 an additional soil layer was observed under Level 3B. Designated Level 3B1, the 2"-4"-thick deposit consisted of a dark yellowish brown silt loam and contained 6,459 artifacts. Artifacts include: window glass; brick and mortar pieces; plaster; clay roof tile fragments; wrought iron nails; 18th and 19th century ceramic vessel sherds; straight pins; buttons; hooks and eyes; dietary animal bone; shellfish debris; glass medicine vials; wood charcoal; tobacco pipe pieces; lead sprue (residue associated with making musket balls); prehistoric stone chipping debris; and a prehistoric stone core from which flakes were removed to make tools. The MCD calculated for Level 3B1 is 1779. Again, the inclusion of decorated pearlware ceramic types in the assemblage indicates that the deposit was created along the outside wall of the building before the middle of the 19th century. For all intents and purposes, Level 3B1 is a refuse deposit comparable to Levels 3A and 3B.

As previously discussed, Level 4 is the designation given to culturally sterile subsoil within the project area. Limestone

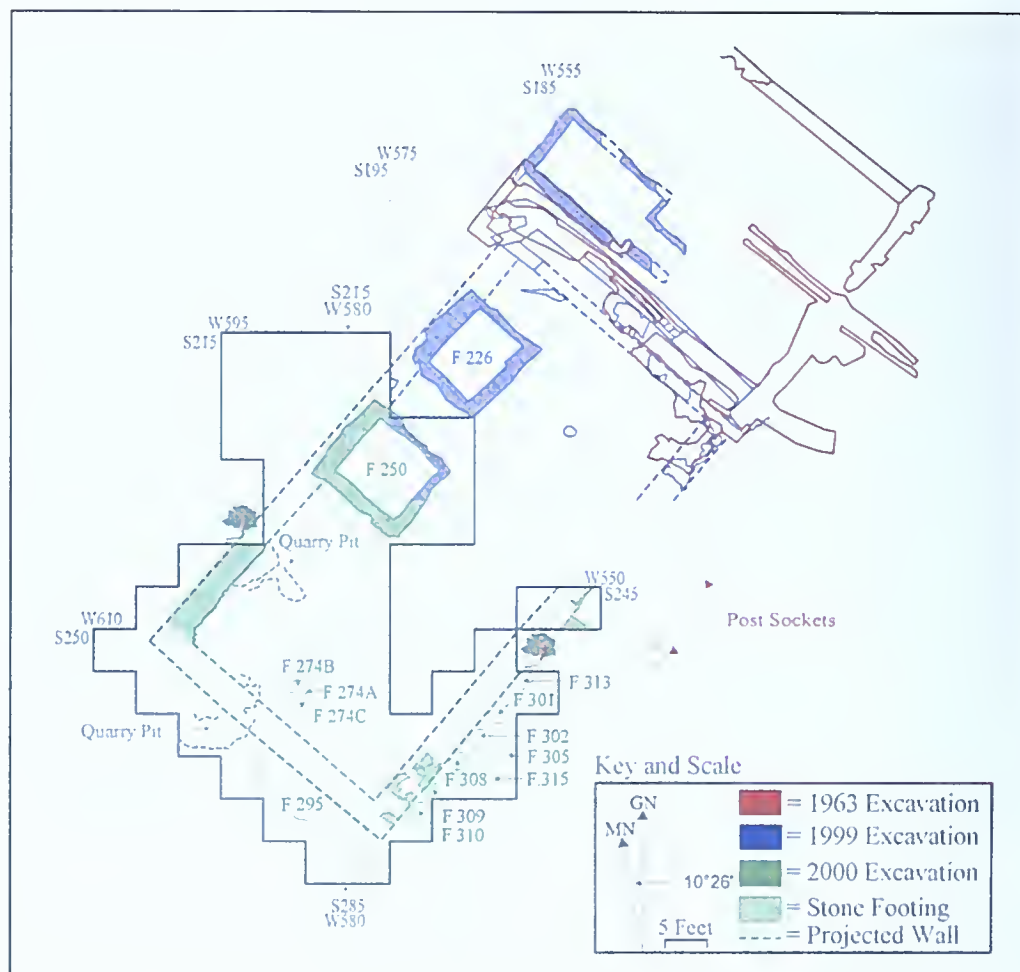


Figure 9. Principal 2000 excavation features, plotted with respect to previously mapped structural evidence.

bedrock is dominant in the soil layer along the entire western margin of the excavation block and a portion of the southern margin.

Structural Features

When Levels 2A, 3A, and 3B soils were removed, masonry elements of the structure that formerly stood on the site became visible. The majority of the structure's footprint consisted of disturbed soil, which was designated Feature 266 and marked by a high concentration of grit and gravel. The absence of stone indicates that both the foundation and footing were robbed during or shortly after demolition. Grit and gravel are byproducts of removing foundation and footing stone and purging

it of lime and "sand" mortar, which formerly cemented pieces together. Much of the gravel is smooth and rounded by water-tumbling, implying that sand for the mortar was obtained from a stream or creek bed. Water-rounded stone does not naturally occur on a hilltop, such as Mount Zion. The nearby Cocalico Creek, which flows along the southern boundary of the Ephrata Cloister property, is a likely source of the material.

A section of stone footing on the west wall line was discovered partially intact in Test Pits 350, 351, 355, 356, and 363 (Figure 9). In Test Pit 363 a preserved inside corner, formed by the intersection of the west and south walls, provided the orientation



Figure 10. West wall footing (under menu board) constructed over limestone quarry pit, facing northwest.

of the south wall line. Plowing destroyed the outside corner of the footing as well as the outside edge of the wall line. No intact footing was found on the south wall line. However, a concentration of large limestone pieces in Test Pits 384, 389, and 390 crudely marked the southern-most segment of the building's east wall line. Orientation of the east wall was confirmed by pulling a measuring tape between the stone and the location of footing remnants discovered and mapped during the 1999 field season.

Excavation of Level 2A soils next to the preserved west wall segment and the southwest corner revealed that limestone quarry pits were dug there before the structure was built (Figure 10). At the time of construction, the pits were filled with virtually sterile soil and the footing was laid over them. At several locations along the south wall line it was evident that the footing was erected directly on bedrock. By today's standards, the building's footing is

extremely shallow, a condition noted elsewhere on Ephrata Cloister grounds (see Brumbaugh 1945).

A large subsurface disturbance, Feature 295, was found extending along the side of and penetrating into the south wall line (see Figure 9). The 4"-thick deposit consisted of a dark yellowish brown gritty clay loam, which appeared in sharp contrast to the reddish brown subsoil that surrounded it. The feature contained 5,921 artifacts, including: window glass; brick and mortar fragments; plaster; clay roof tile pieces; wrought iron nails; oil lamp chimney glass pieces; 18th and 19th century ceramic vessel sherds; bottle glass pieces; straight pins and buttons; dietary animal bone and shellfish debris; wood charcoal; and prehistoric stone chipping debris. Hand-painted pearlware ceramic sherds, produced in England between 1790 and 1840, are the most recent ceramic type recovered from the feature and suggest the disturbance predates the middle of the 19th century.

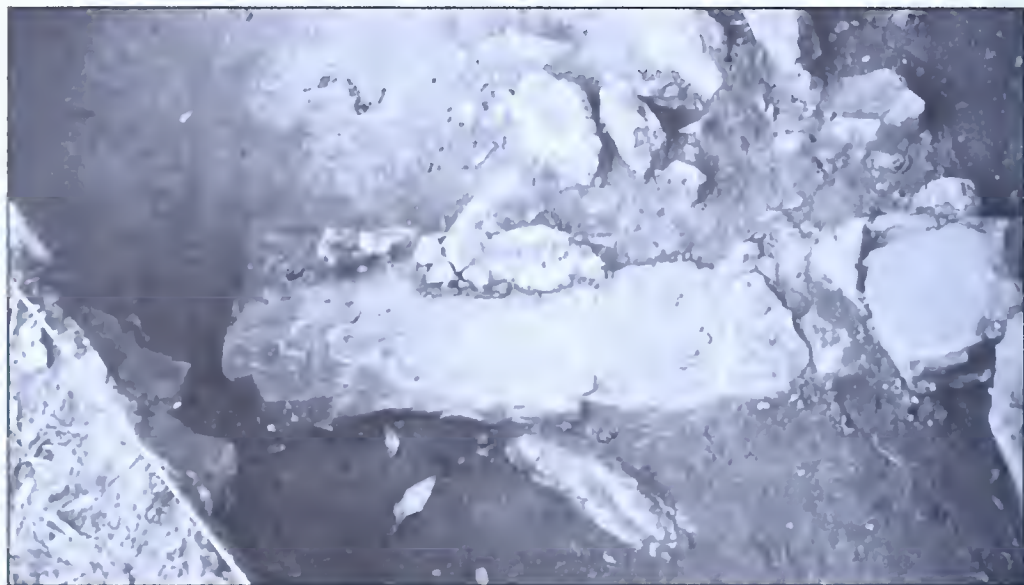


Figure 11. Intact limestone and mortar marking possible doorway on east wall line.

The feature is interpreted to be a trench dug to recover stone from the structure's footing after the building was demolished. Large quantities of domestic artifacts in the assemblage (71.3%) indicate the trench cut into refuse deposits, which accumulated against the south wall of the structure. The MCD calculated for the deposit is 1775, approximating a mid-point in the period when trash was deposited there.

In Test Pit 410 a large limestone block was found mortared against the outside edge of the footing (Figure 11). It is spatially associated with wood post sockets, discovered during the 1963 investigation, and is thought to denote a doorway. The post sockets may represent the remains of a protected entry. Protected entries, though not supported by posts, are found on the majority of extant Cloister structures dating to the 18th century.

Two large adjoining postholes, designated Features 274B and 274C, were discovered inside the structure, midway between the west and east footing and near the south wall line (see Figure 9). Each measured two feet in diameter and ranged from 2" to 4" in depth. Limestone bedrock was dis-

covered at the bottom of each posthole. Feature 274B contained an obvious postmold, the organic remains of a wooden post, which was labeled Feature 274A. It measured 9" in diameter and extended to a depth of 4". Whenever a posthole contains a postmold, its fill is carefully separated from that of the postmold during excavation. Artifacts found in the posthole fill are assumed to have been present at the time the hole was dug and back-filled, securing the post in the ground. Artifacts recovered from postmold fill, on the contrary, are assumed to have migrated into the void created either when the post was intentionally removed from the hole or after the post decomposed. If a postmold is not visible in a posthole, the feature's fill is suspect, for the post was likely removed. In the process of removal and closing the hole, fill may have been added, becoming mixed with and indistinguishable from original fill.

Feature 274A, the postmold, contained fifteen artifacts, including: a piece of window glass; two brick fragments; two plain red earthenware ceramic vessel sherds; one plain creamware ceramic vessel sherd; seven pieces of wood charcoal; and two



Figure 12. Completed excavation, facing northwest. Footing perimeter is marked by flagging tape; note evenly spaced pit depressions along outside edge of east wall line in foreground.

fragments of decayed wood. Of these objects, the creamware sherd is the only datable artifact. Creamware is an English ceramic type produced during the period 1762-1820. Hence, the post could not have been abandoned until sometime after 1762.

Feature 274B fill produced nine artifacts, including: two pieces of window glass; one brick fragment; one piece of mortar; two plain red earthenware ceramic vessel sherds; one hand-painted pearlware ceramic vessel sherd; and two pieces of dietary animal bone. As previously discussed, hand-painted pearlware was produced during the period 1790-1840. Thus, the pearlware sherd indicates the post was not installed at this location until after 1790.

Feature 274C fill produced nineteen artifacts, including: one piece of window glass; six brick fragments; eight plain and decorated red earthenware ceramic vessel sherds; two plain creamware sherds; one tin-glazed earthenware sherd; and one piece of dietary animal bone. For reasons stated above, artifacts recovered from the

feature's fill are not reliable indicators of when the hole was dug.

Feature 274C is interpreted to be an original interior support post. Its position on the midline of the building suggests that it was installed to support an overhead central beam, which received and anchored joists on the second floor of the structure. The 274B posthole and 274A postmold, on the other hand, are interpreted to be the remains of a replacement post inserted in the 1790s, when 274C no longer possessed structural integrity. Posts placed directly in the ground are subject to decay. The practice of using replacement posts to maintain aging buildings on the Ephrata Cloister property is well documented by archaeological investigations previously conducted at the Kedar site (see Warfel 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999).

A series of six evenly spaced pits, labeled Features 301, 302, 308, 309, 310, and 313, were discovered along the outside edge of the building's east wall line (Figures 9 and 12). The diameters of the pits ranged from



Figure 13. Feature 250 cellar, facing southeast. Note remnant of intact mortar floor.

20" to 32"; whereas, their depths ranged from 5" to 9" below the subsoil surface. The features produced remarkably similar contents, including: clay daub; wrought iron nails; window glass pieces; brick and mortar fragments; two red earthenware ceramic vessel sherds; one piece of vessel glass; two pieces of dietary animal bone; and numerous pieces (150+) of wood charcoal. It is significant that 93% of the artifacts are architectural in nature. Elsewhere on the site deposits found along the outside perimeter of wall lines typically contain household refuse. It is also significant that the pits yielded so few artifacts. Not including pieces of wood charcoal, only 147 objects were recovered. Charcoal was probably on the ground when the holes were dug and filled. It is a byproduct of clearing trees and brush from the hilltop in preparation for construction.

The pits are interpreted to be construction features, dug to receive temporary wooden supports, which stabilized the building's frame during construction. Their presence, as well as numerous pieces of clay daub found in them, suggests the building was framed in a traditional half-timber style. Clay daub is used to pack and cement pieces of stone between wood frame members in half-timber construction. After internal framing was installed, thereby stabilizing exterior walls, the supports were no longer needed and removed. Construction artifacts lying on the ground surface, such as daub, window glass, mortar, brick, nails, etc., were unintentionally shoveled into the holes when the pits were closed. The small amount of household refuse recovered from these features further strengthens their association with construction activities. The 1738 dormito-



Figure 14. Reconstructed ceramics recovered from cellar fill layers.

ry was the first structure built on Mount Zion; there was little, if any, refuse accumulation in the project area at the time of construction.

Two small features, 305 and 315, were located east of the construction pits (see Figure 9). At first glance they appeared to be functionally related to the pits. Because each contained domestic artifact types (primarily ceramic vessel sherds and dietary animal bones) dating to the third quarter of the 18th century, it is evident that they are not contemporary with the construction pits. Their purpose is unknown.

Consistent with project objectives, the Feature 250 cellar was completely excavated, revealing its overall dimensions and architecture (Figure 13). The inside dimensions of the cellar are 8' 2" (north-east-southwest axis) by 10' 1" (southeast-

northwest axis). The elevation of the cellar floor is 355.81'. Similar to the Feature 226 cellar, Feature 250 was carved into limestone bedrock. The hole was lined with mortar-laid limestone, plastered, and painted with whitewash.

Four distinct layers of debris filled the cellar. The top layer (Feature 250, Level 1) consisted of Level 3A soil (previously discussed), which overlaid a dense limestone rubble layer (Feature 250, Level 2). Stone rubble was obviously pushed into the cellar hole from the west side of the building. It was considerably thicker on the west side of the feature and noticeably slumped to the east. Under the rubble, a layer of dark yellowish brown clay loam (Feature 250, Level 3) was found, which covered the eastern two-thirds of the cellar floor. The final layer of fill (Feature 250, Level 4), a mottled yellowish brown and dark



Figure 15. West wall of Feature 250 cellar, facing northwest. Note collapsed lining and stone-filled ventilation shaft.

yellowish brown clay loam, laid directly on the western third of the cellar floor. Ceramic vessel sherds recovered from each layer mend with one another, verifying that fill soils and rubble were deposited at or about the same time (Figure 14).

An intact mortar-like finish was found on the eastern third of the cellar floor. It once covered the entire surface, but was eroded due to standing water. Two flat limestone blocks, discovered in the southeast corner of the floor, mark the location of a ladder-drop and prevented the bottom of a ladder from coming into direct contact with the floor. Evidence of water damage is apparent on the west cellar wall, which is distinctly bowed. Mortar holding the wall together was so badly eroded that all but the bottom course of its masonry lining had collapsed into the cellar. In spite of the wall's condition, the location of a ventilation shaft, carved into limestone bedrock, remains visible (Figure 15). It was choked with pieces of stone, as if an attempt was made to prevent water from flowing into the subterranean room. A limestone outcrop occurs directly west of the structure. Seasonal rains would have sent water sheeting off the stone and against the foundation of the building.

A total of 23,906 objects, including artifacts recovered from Feature 250 during

the 1999 field season, were recovered from the cellar. Architectural artifacts make up 65.9% of the cellar assemblage and are interpreted to be the result of the building's demolition. Large quantities of broken ceramic vessels and dietary animal bones indicate demolition debris was mixed with household refuse, which accumulated against the building's west wall. Because hand-painted pearlwares are the most recent ceramic types found in fill covering the cellar floor, a late 1840s closing date is suggested for the feature.

The architecture of Feature 250 is quite different from that of the cellar unearthed in 1999. Feature 250 is larger; it does not have built-in storage shelves or alcoves; and it does not have a beveled wall at the ladder-drop entry. Different kinds of goods were probably stored in the two cellars. Perhaps Feature 250 was used to store bulk goods, such as barrels, casks, or bales. Unless a fortunate document is discovered at some future date, we will never know the reasons for their dissimilarity. Both cellars were kept "clean" until the building was demolished; hence, no artifacts resulting from use were found in place - the type of evidence required to address observed differences.

Artifacts

Although it seemed impossible to recover a larger artifact collection than the one produced by the 1999 field season (179,629 objects), the present project did just that! Over the course of eight weeks, 269,161 artifacts were carefully sifted and removed from project area soils. This total includes pieces of coal and cinder found in features as well as wood charcoal, for neither occurs naturally on the site. Prehistoric artifacts number 433 and account for .16% of the assemblage. The grand total of prehistoric and historic artifacts found on Mount Zion as a result of 1963, 1999, and 2000 archaeological investigations combined is 486,674 artifacts. Prehistoric objects (757) account for .15% of the combined collection.

Considering the austere value system of the Cloister community, this is a surprisingly large artifact collection. However, we must remember that the Zionitic Brotherhood only occupied the dormitory building for seven years. Throughout most of the structure's life, men, women, children, and the Continental Army lived there. None were bound by the strict discipline of the Beissel-led community. Unfortunately, agricultural use of the land, following the building's demolition, mixed refuse deposits created by each group. Yet, in spite of the disturbance, we can identify significant artifact types associated with specific inhabitants because documentary evidence provides clues to the nature of their distinctive activities.

Zionitic Brotherhood Period **(1738-1745)**

Certainly the greatest quantities of artifacts associated with the Zionitic Brotherhood's Mount Zion habitation are remnants of the 1738 dormitory. Two hundred and six thousand, seven hundred and ninety-seven (206,797) architectural artifacts or 42.6% of all historic period objects found during the three investigation years represent the building that formerly stood on the site. Recovered objects indicate it was a half-

timber structure with leaded windows, ceramic stoves, brick hearths, and plastered cellars. Clay roof tile fragments found scattered across the project area suggest one or more bake ovens stood nearby. Surviving bake ovens on the Cloister property invariably have clay tile roofs, used in place of wood shingles as a fire prevention measure. It is not known if other types of Cloister outbuildings were also roofed with clay tiles.

The Brotherhood's printing activities are well documented. Eighteenth century books, booklets, broadsides, certificates, etc., printed at the Cloister, still exist and may be found in both public and private collections. Four pieces of lead printers' type and a lead type spacer were recovered during the present project. Two of the pieces are border type and bear ornamental decoration. The third is an upper case "H", and the fourth is the numeral "7." Combining all excavation seasons, a total of eight pieces of lead type and one type spacer were unearthed on the hilltop (Figure 16). These artifacts are particularly significant, for they provide direct evidence of the Brotherhood's earliest printing industry. Prior to their discovery, it was thought that the Brothers did not engage in printing until they assumed residence in the Bethania dormitory.

Possibly related to the Mount Zion printing industry are pieces of brass or copper book corners, ornaments, clasps, and hinges (Figure 16). Such hardware is commonly found on leather bound books of the period. Although documentary evidence indicates a tannery was operated on the Cloister property and leather bindings were made in later years, these objects do not necessarily imply manufacture by the Zionitic Brotherhood. Many are quite worn and may simply represent the presence of old books in the building.

Similar to the 1999 field season, examples of personally-initialed red earthenware ceramic vessels were recovered (Figure

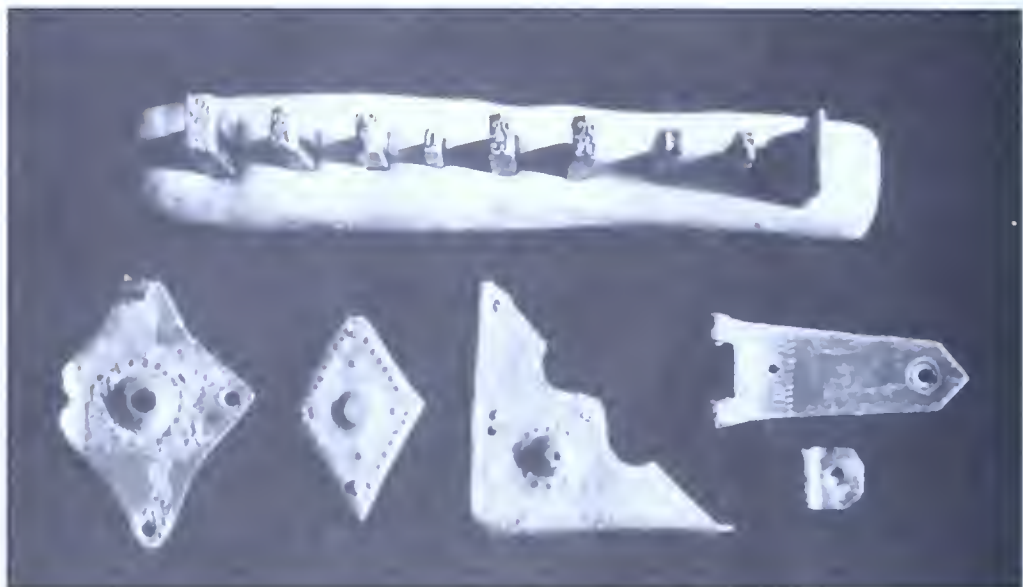


Figure 16. Lead printers' type and book hardware.

17). One piece bears the letter "M" and another the letter "X." Additional sherds with scratched marks were found, but are too fragmentary to identify initials. The initials are scratched into the fired surface of vessels and are not to be confused with maker's marks, impressed into clay by potters to mark their wares before firing in a kiln. Thus far, thirty examples have been found as a result of archaeological research on the Cloister property. All examples

with good provenience (information documenting discovery location) are associated with sites inhabited by the Brotherhood and may signify a behavior specific to that segment of Cloister society. The discovery of these distinctive artifacts indicates that not all members subscribed to the doctrine of communal living, where "property was declared sinful, and everything brought together in common" (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:121).



Figure 17. Personally-initialed ceramic vessel sherds.

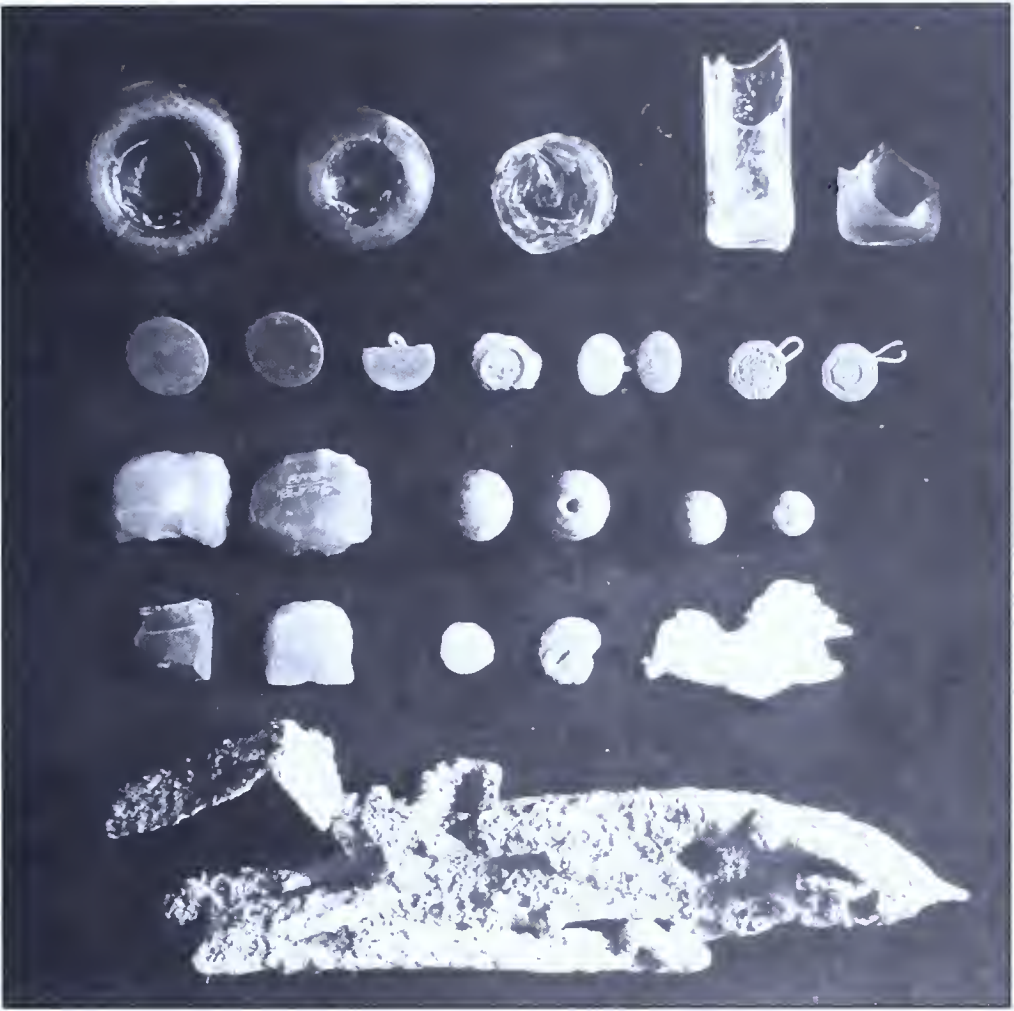


Figure 18. Select military objects. (Top row, medicine vials; second row, buttons and sleeve links; third row, gun flints and musket balls; fourth row, gunflints, fired musket balls, and lead sprue; fifth row, gun lock.

Military Hospital Period (1777-1778)

The military occupation of the dormitory site and the structure's use as a hospital during the winter of 1777-1778 only lasted for seven months. Yet, a surprisingly large number of distinctive artifacts are associated with the event. They include: glass medicine vials, buttons, cuff or sleeve links, gun parts, gun flints, and musket balls. Curiously, one of the musket balls has a hole drilled through it. In 1963, a fired, spiked musket ball was found on Mount Zion (Biever 1967:57). The prac-

tice of spiking or driving nails into lead balls to make them more lethal was first brought to General Washington's attention by British General Howe in 1776, when British troops discovered a pile of the projectiles at an abandoned Continental Army campsite (Calver and Bolton 1950:76). Even though Washington abhorred the practice and vowed to "take every measure ... to prevent so wicked and infamous a practice being adopted in this Army" (Calver and Bolton 1950:76), it appears that his instructions were ignored.

Lead sprue, a byproduct of pouring molten lead into musket ball moulds, is also pres-

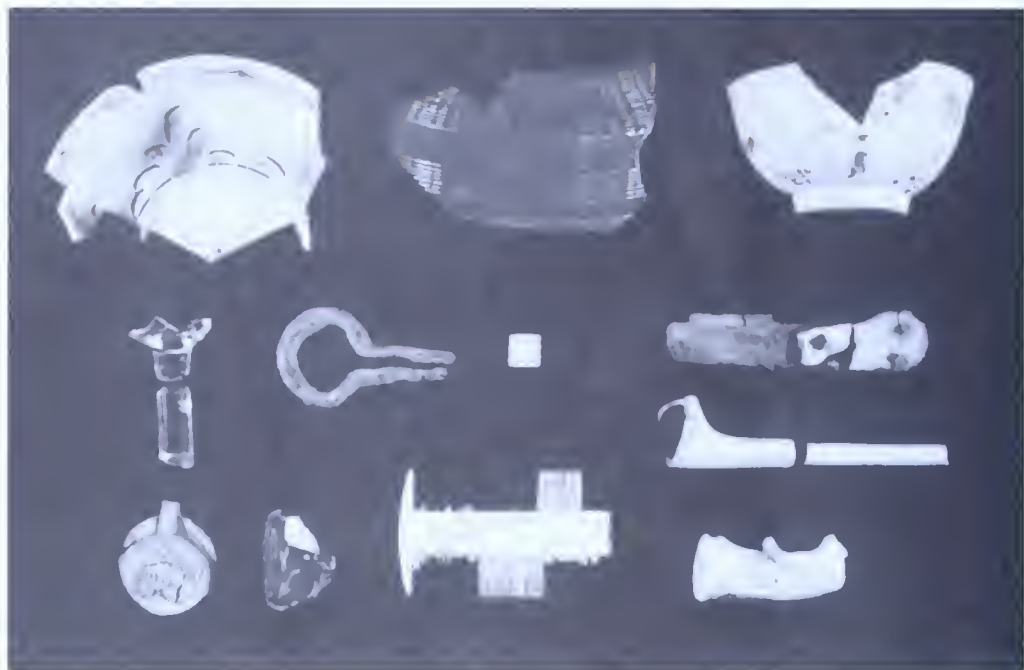


Figure 19. Possible military objects. (Top row, refined English-made ceramics; second row, stemware, mouth harp, bone die, pocket knife, a kaolin clay pipe stem and bowl; third row, lead bale seal, strike-a-light flint, bone "cootie" comb, and "stubby" effigy pipe.)

ent (Figure 18). Recuperating soldiers were evidently assigned the task of making lead balls before their discharge and return to combat units. Considering how poorly supplied the Continental Army was at the time, this finding is not surprising.

A number of other artifacts found on the site are likely the product of military occupation. They include: refined English earthenware ceramic vessels, wine goblets, mouth harps (small musical instruments held between the teeth when played), bone dice, pocket knives, bale seals (lead seals used by merchants to mark bundles of dry goods or used to demonstrate payment of excise taxes), strike-a-light flints, white kaolin clay and "stubby" tobacco pipes, and bone "cootie" combs used to remove head lice (Figure 19). As inviting as it is to assign these artifacts to the military occupation, any one of them could have been brought to and used at the site by members of the Eckerlin faction, who reoccupied the dormitory in the 1760s. Similar objects, however, have been found on excavated Revolutionary War period sites.

Eckerlin Faction Period (1764-19th century)

Dissident members, who departed from the Cloister community with the Eckerlin brothers in 1745, returned to the site in 1764 and reoccupied the Mount Zion convent. One of those members, Brother Ezechiele Sangmeister, kept a diary, which provides some insights into their activities. According to Sangmeister, "Brothers Anton and Haggai were tailoring" (1825:11). He also notes that Conrad Beissel "forbade the Sisters to let shoes be made by us" (Sangmeister 1825:16), indicating that others were engaged in cobbling. Both industries are reflected in the archaeological record of the site.

As a result of combined archaeological investigations, literally hundreds of buttons, brass hooks and eyes, straight pins, and thimbles, in addition to several pairs of scissors, have been unearthed. The quantities of each are larger than would normally be found on a historic period domestic site of this time period, unmistakably



Figure 20. Pocket watch keys. (Modern dime included for scale.)

reflecting the activities of tailors. Likewise, a large number of shoe buckles, leather punches, iron tacks, and several shears represent the craft of cobblers. Leather scraps were probably plentiful at the site, but do not survive, due to alternating wet and dry climatic conditions. Surprisingly, two leather scraps with iron fasteners were found during the present project. They are in such poor condition that they cannot be positively identified as shoe parts.

Five pocket watch keys were recovered during the present excavation (Figure 20). This artifact type has not appeared previously in the site's archaeological record. Contact with several horologists (those engaged in the science of measuring time) from around the world indicates that the keys most likely date to the period 1780-1850. Keys were used to tension pocket

watch main springs and set the hands (Günther 1982:4). Prior to 1845, all pocket watches were wound with a key. Between 1845 and 1860, Adrien Philippe, co-founder of a well-known Geneva watch company, filed several patents for a crown winder mechanism, which rendered the watch key obsolete (Moser 1998:3). It is difficult to assess the significance of the watch keys other than to note that they reflect a certain measure of personal wealth. Ownership of a watch is often recorded in 19th century personal tax assessments (see Warfel and Weaver 1989:108-109).

Many of the coins recovered from the dormitory site can be attributed directly to the Eckerlin faction. As a product of three seasons of investigation, 56% of all datable 18th and 19th century coins found on Mount Zion were minted during the period

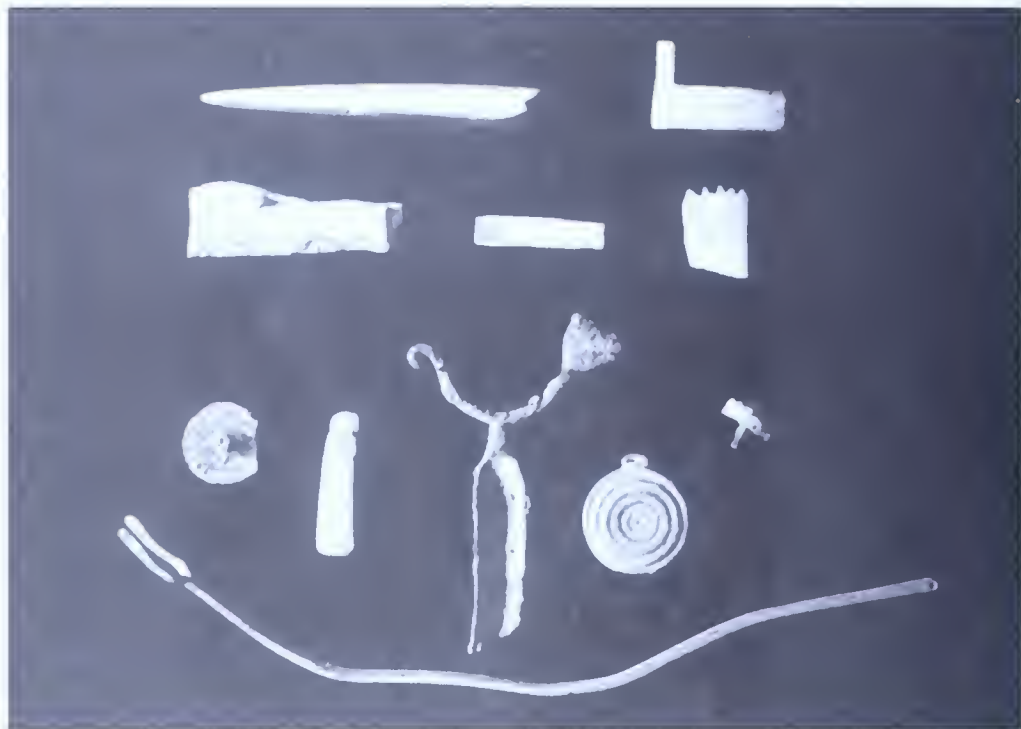


Figure 21. Unidentified artifacts. (Items in top two rows are made of bone; items in bottom two rows are made of metal.)

1780-1850. Although not all of the dissident members' economic activities are documented, it is evident that they did not assume the vow of poverty accepted by the Beissel-led community. The recovered coins are a rather dramatic representation of their acceptance of and participation in worldly affairs.

Eckerlin faction members engaged in other activities that are not recorded in surviving documents. Any distinct artifact concentrations, which resulted from undocumented activities, were mixed with refuse deposits and dispersed across the site by post-demolition plowing. Hence, they are forever lost to time.

Miscellaneous Artifacts

Every archaeological investigation produces a small number of artifacts that cannot be positively identified. Not only do we find "pieces of things," but also the discovery may be only a "part of a piece of a thing." Furthermore, artifact identification

is based on experience. Either the object is something that the archaeologist saw before, or it is something that someone else saw and described or illustrated in a publication. The present project produced a number of miscellaneous artifacts that remain unidentified. They are items made of metal or bone. If you recognize the objects illustrated in Figure 21, please contact The State Museum's Section of Archaeology.

Prehistoric Artifacts

Four hundred and thirty-three (433) stone artifacts, representing the hilltop's habitation by prehistoric Native Americans, were found mixed throughout project area soils. The assemblage consists of cores, chipping debris, hammerstones, an anvil stone, spear tips, bifaces (blades intentionally chipped or "worked" on both sides), a knife, scrapers, and utilized flakes (Figure 22). Quartz and jasper, some of which was heat-treated to make the material easier to work with, are the two types of favored



Figure 22. Prehistoric artifacts. (Top row, spear tips; bottom row, jasper knife, quartz end scraper, and quartzite end scraper.)

stone. Quartz occurs locally and is plentiful near the project area; whereas, the procurement of jasper required trade with other native peoples or visits to quarry sources some distance from the site. Because the prehistoric artifacts were found in soils mixed by historic period activity, it is not possible to determine the time period when one stone type was preferred over another.

These artifacts correspond to a variety of activities associated with hunting, butchering, and processing hides. Cores, hammerstones, and chipping debris account for 93.8% of the collection and result from making and maintaining (sharpening) tools at the site. Bifaces, scrapers, knives and utilized flakes were used to butcher game and prepare hides. Spear tips, once hafted to wooden shafts, were the principal hunting tools. Their shapes or forms indicate Mount Zion was intermittently used as a

hunting camp over a period of several thousand years - beginning around 8000 years ago and ending 3500 years ago. This period of prehistory is referred to as the Archaic Period. It is a time when small nomadic bands of people settled at different locations for brief periods of time while hunting and gathering food stuffs. It is thought that Mount Zion offered some strategic advantage for observing and/or hunting game.

Prehistoric artifacts recovered during 1963 and 1999 field seasons on Mount Zion are comparable to the sample recovered during the present project. Thus far, no evidence of the subsequent Woodland period (ca. 1000 B.C.-1500 A.D.) has been found on the hilltop. During the Woodland Period, native peoples were more sedentary, living in hamlets and villages sustained by horticulture, hunting, and gathering.

Conclusions

The 2000 excavation on Mount Zion successfully located and documented the Zionitic Brotherhood's dormitory, constructed in 1738. For the first time in at least 150 years, the location of this important structure can be precisely placed on the Ephrata Cloister landscape. The discovery is significant because the building marks the missing corner of the triangular-shaped historic Ephrata community. Visitors and site staff no longer need to approximate the limits of the 18th century village.

Excavated artifacts and features provide a new understanding of Conrad Beissel's concern for the Brotherhood's flirtation with "worldly ways." The dormitory, now known to measure 60' x 35', is slightly smaller than Kedar - the first communal structure built for celibate members in 1735, but used exclusively as a Sisters residence between 1738 and 1745. With the planned addition, referenced in the *Chronicon* and represented by a 40'-square foundation discovered in 1963, the Zionitic Brotherhood would have occupied and controlled the largest building in the Ephrata community. If viewed as a symbol of power and opulence, the structural addition was surely a threat to both the Sisterhood and Conrad Beissel. Hence, Beissel regained control of his flock by expelling errant Brothers and relocating others to the meadow "near him."

How did such an important building become lost? The answer to this question is found in the realization that the structure's importance changed through time. The building and a complete record of activities that occurred in it are of interest today, because we want to understand and interpret a factual Ephrata story, not one that patronizes tradition and lore. Circa 1850, when the structure was dismantled and its land converted to farm fields, the site likely held little interest for members of the Seventh Day Baptist Society of Ephrata. There was no reason to either

mark the site or preserve memory of it. More than one member probably muttered "good riddance," considering that the old building was a constant reminder of turmoil within the religious community. After all, is it not where Beissel confronted the powerful Zionitic Brotherhood, forever splitting the community and denying it of its spiritual potential?

The story of the dormitory building further reminds us that Beissel's experiment was fraught with woes. Religious idealism lured followers to his camp on the Cocalico Creek and was difficult to maintain. Both written and archaeological records document constant tension, which beleaguered the Ephrata society. Members arose each night to await the Second Coming of Christ, yet with construction of the Mount Zion convent a tradition of building for the future began. Unlike Kedar, which was post-built and impermanent, the Mount Zion dormitory was half-timber and designed to last for many years. The discovery of two large storage cellars, carved deep into bedrock limestone beneath the structure's floor, certainly implies that not all members believed the Second Coming was imminent. Tension is further expressed in behavior, which contradicts the society's value system. Why mark objects, like ordinary earthenware cups and bowls for personal use, if possessions were considered sinful and ownership was communal? Why purchase mills expected to make profits, if an impoverished human condition promotes union with God?

Discovery of the Zionitic Brotherhood's convent demands that we forsake previous versions of the Mount Zion story, even if they are familiar and comfortable. A factual history of the Ephrata community must include ordinary human beings, subject to temptation, internal disputes, and influences from the outside world. Although at times peculiar, the men and women who made up the Ephrata society

were not super human, as portrayed by earlier historians who romanticized the Cloister experience. Likewise, no evidence has been found to collaborate tradition, which claims that the Kedar and the Mount Zion convent were burned or torn down to rid the community of typhus infection following their use as military hospitals (see Ernst 1963:349). On the contrary, archaeological data, carefully gathered from both sites, indicate that each building survived into the 19th century.

Although nearly a half million artifacts have been recovered from the hilltop and the 1738 convent has been located, much work remains to be done on Mount Zion. The 2001 field season will investigate a large cellar partially discovered and sampled during the 1963 dig. The subterranean room may be a vault “wherein the deceased were to be entombed” (Lamech and Agrippa 1786:142). Because it is associated with the wing or structural addition to the convent that was never realized, there is no reason to expect that human remains are present. It may, however, con-

tain undisturbed refuse deposits resulting from one or more of the convent’s known occupants. If so, the unique opportunity will exist to compare and contrast Mount Zion lifestyles with those of the Beisselled community. The architecture of the room will also be compared and contrasted with excavated dormitory storage cellars and documented burial crypts in the Mount Zion cemetery.

Two Mount Zion structures depicted on the 1815 survey remain to be discovered. During the 2001 field season, exploratory trenches will be dug west of the convent site to locate remnants of the 1739 prayer house. Future excavations will seek to find the third building shown on the survey, ascertain construction and demolition dates, and determine its function. Until these tasks are accomplished, the Mount Zion story remains incomplete and impossible to accurately interpret for the thousands of men, women, and children who annually visit this Commonwealth historic site.

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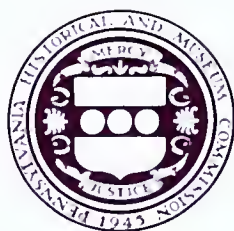
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